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REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-5, 7-11, and 13-22 have been cancelled, claims 6 and 12 have been amended, and new claims 23-35 have been added.

Claims 6, 12, and 23-35 are now pending and under consideration.

In the Office Action, claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 and 35 U.S.C. 112(2) as reciting non-statutory subject matter, and claims 1, 6, 12, 13, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,611,947 to Higgins et al. The foregoing rejections are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is cancelled and new claims 23, 24, and 25 are added to correspond to cancelled claim 1 and to recite additional features of the present invention. Claims 6 and 12, which depended from claim 1, are amended to depend from new claim 23. New claims 26 and 27 are added, corresponding to claims 6 and 12, respectively, but depending from new claim 24. Likewise, new claims 28 and 29 are added, also corresponding to claims 6 and 12, respectively, but depending from new claim 25.

Claim 13 is cancelled and new claims 30, 31, and 32 are added to correspond to cancelled claim 13 and to recite additional features of the present invention.

Claim 18 is cancelled and new claims 33, 34, and 35 are added to correspond to cancelled claim 18, to recite additional features of the present invention, and to recite statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C. 101 and 35 U.S.C. 112(2).

Higgins discusses a method for determining the functional equivalence between two circuit models in a distributed computing environment.

However, Higgins does not discuss or suggest (using the recitation of new apparatus claim 23 as an example) "when verification information on the subcone becomes mismatched, said display control section graphically displays the mismatched subcone". New method claim 30 and new computer-readable medium claim 33 recite similar features of the present invention as new apparatus claim 23.

Likewise, Higgins does not discuss or suggest (using the recitation of new apparatus claim 24 as an example) ", said subcone extracting section extracts subcones in accordance with any one of the following manners (1) to (3):

(1) when the structures are matched to each other, said subcone extracting section

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extracting the structure as subcones;

(2) when instance names are matched to each other, said subcone extracting section extracting the instance names as subcones; and

(3) said subcone extracting section extracting subcones so that subcones in which an output point outputs a fixed value and the values of the output point become equal to one another are excluded". New method claim 31 and new computer-readable medium claim 34 recite similar features of the present invention as new apparatus claim 24.

Moreover, Higgins does not discuss or suggest (using the recitation of new apparatus claim 25 as an example) "where a plurality of subcone mismatches are detected said verifying section verifies mismatch cause by assuming elements which exist in the mismatched subcones to be common mismatch cause candidates." New method claim 32 and new computer-readable medium claim 35 recite similar features of the present invention as new apparatus claim 25.

The foregoing dependent claims recite patentably distinguishing features of their own. For example, claim 6/23 recites "said display control section displays, based on the results of said logical equivalence verification, only those subcones for which said logical equivalence verification has resulted in mismatch."

Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 6 and 12 and allowance of new claims 23-35 over Higgins is respectfully requested.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: July 21, 2006By: [Signature]
Gene M. Garner, II
Registration No. 34,172

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501

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on July 21, 2006

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